

**CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT  
CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2008**

Council President Simms called the meeting to order at 7:08p.m.

Present: Councilmember Johnie L. Higgs, Sr., Councilmember John Morris, Councilmember Kelly Porter, Councilmember Brian K. Shivers (Late), Councilmember Elenora Simms

Absent: Mayor Eugene Grant, Councilmember Charl Jones

Excused: Councilmember Reveral Yeargin

Staff: Sandra A. Yates, Acting City Administrator; Dashaun Lanham, Acting City Clerk

The invocation was given by Councilmember Higgs

It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Jones to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**Northern Real Estate Urban Ventures**

Councilmember Porter, Chair of Economic Development stated that some of the questions or reports hadn't come back before the meeting, as the parties did not provide the information to the Council.

Councilmember Porter stated that he agreed that the questions posed by Ms. Merritt need to be answered. Councilmember Porter asked Ms. Merritt if she was working on the project could she provide the Council with reports and recommendations of the developer.

Ms. Merritt stated that she could provide reports to the Council. Ms. Merritt stated that her company could review all of the development projects in the City. She stated that the developers should be spending their money, not the City spending it's money.

Ms. Merritt stated that she is working on several projects in the District of Columbia where the developer does not have site control, but they are spending their money to develop the site.

Ms. Merritt stated that the other thing that is bothersome about the existing agreement is the City is financially responsibility. Ms. Merritt stated that she can negotiate a trade, but it is usually difficult.

Councilmember Porter stated that the market place was in a different timeframe then the agreement. He wanted to know how cant they City negotiate with the parties, as he do not feel they will be amenable to a change in the project. He wanted to know if we could give them every available opportunity to make the deal work.

Councilmember Simms stated she can speak for all her colleagues and their interest in seeing new development in the City. Councilmember Simms wanted to know if the City agreed to work with Northern Real Estate Urban Venture, what will they do for the City.

Councilmember Higgs stated that in accordance to the agreement with the exclusive right is not a good for the City. He wanted to know if Ms. Merritt has ever seen where you can negotiate for more and should we have an exit strategy.

Ms. Merritt stated to Councilmember Higgs that it can be negotiated, but it's usually agreed to in the beginning. She stated that she will be requesting documents from them and giving them 72 hours to respond. If they do not have the paperwork, we do not need to talk to them. If they produce the documents, we will review and decide how to get out of the agreement.

Councilmember Simms wanted to know if the service cost for Northern Real Estate Urban Venture was negotiable.

Ms. Merritt stated it is negotiable. However, if she's writing a letter to terminate the agreement it is nothing. Ms. Merritt stated that they can strategize a development project.

Councilmember Higgs inquired if they had experience in putting together a comprehensive plan.

Ms. Merritt stated that she does and they will work with the architect on developing plans.

Councilmember Simms asked Ms. Merritt to get back with Ms. Yates soon on the status.

Councilmember Porter asked the City Council if they had selected Gina Merritt as the Project Manager. He wanted to know if the City had received a cost analyst from the other Project Managers.

Ms. Yates stated that the cost are based on the project they are hired to do. She stated that Ms. Merritt strength was land development.

Councilmember Shivers inquired if the Council asked for one Project Manager to come back and based on the vote of which Councilmember's.

## **REPORTS**

### **City Administrator's Report – Sandra Yates, Acting City Administrator**

- Website – the design concept is attached relative to color schematics and banner format. The content will be added last. The website banner will remain the same and the colors will be used from the City's seal.
- Councilmember Porter asked if the tabs can be done in a different color.
- Ms. Yates stated that it will not be tabs at the top, but scrolls.
- Councilmember Simms asked the City Council if they agreed with the colors, as they are good for anyone with a vision impairment.
- Councilmember Porter stated that he's interested in the top portion being a different color or having tabs.
- Ms. Yates stated that it would be a good idea to have a Council committee work on the website.
- Councilmember Porter wanted to know the timeline.
- Ms. Yates stated they have been working on the website for a couple of months.
- Councilmember Higgs inquired if the Charter could be added to the website.
- Ms. Yates stated that it will be a link for the Charter and Code.
- The Administrator and Treasurer are preparing a budget re-appropriation ordinance for Council consideration at the Monday, February 11<sup>th</sup> public session, as the Police Department is out funds for Maintenance and overtime and the Public Works Department is over budget for overtime.
- Councilmember Simms stated that these funds should have been put into the budget.
- Ms. Yates stated that when we presented our budget it was changed without notice to the Department Heads. She stated that she has asked Mayor Grant if the budget is changed, can the Department Heads be notified.
- Ms. Yates stated we need the maintenance staff for the police cars.

- Councilmember Morris stated there is an accountability to the officers at inspection by the supervisors.
- Councilmember Porter stated that we are suppose to have a Fleet Maintenance program. We sent Mr. Oliver to a training.
- Councilmember Higgs wanted to know who selected the person to attend the training.
- Councilmember Morris stated that the officers should be changing the oil every three thousand miles or every three months.
- Councilmember Simms inquired if the company that produced the software provide training.
- Councilmember Porter inquired of the Public Works staff member that attended Lincoln Tech and whether or not he completed the program.
- Ms. Yates the employee just completed his first year in Lincoln Tech.
- Community groups have been contacted to submit requests to the City Council to use the Feggans Center facilities at no charge. The letters will be evaluated and packaged and submitted to Council by February 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Prince George's County is renovating 4 City streets at absolutely no charge to Seat Pleasant. The work is being supervised by County staff, as well. Concrete work (sidewalk, curbs) will be performed first, followed by razing and resurfacing of asphalt in the Spring, after the weather adjusts. Streets are: 68<sup>th</sup> Place, 69<sup>th</sup> Street, Crown Street, Baltic Street (sidewalks only), and Drylog Street. If funding can be located, James Farmer Way will be added to the list. These streets do not conflict with the City's FY32 CDBG grant application.
- Councilmember Porter inquired if we have someone from the City overseeing what they are doing.
- Ms. Yates stated we can hire an engineer to review their work.
- Councilmember Simms stated that we need to have a sign up informing the residents of the work that is being done.
- Code Enforcement new procedure by allowing homeowners 72 hours to make a correction has instituted to issue compliance letters prior to corrective actions has resulted in more than 75% compliance. The new process has been a resounding success.
- To our knowledge, all rental properties have obtained rental permits.
- Mr. Matthew Rush, who comes to the City via the DC Project Empowerment program, has been an excellent addition to the Code Enforcement department.
- Code Enforcement has been referring delinquent properties to a development team; they have purchased and rehabbed about a half-dozen properties in the City thus far.

- We have begun investigating problem properties with delinquent taxes to determine if the City can acquire the properties. Community Legacy has confirmed that our current grant funds can be used for this purpose.
- A second appraisal proposal was received to assess all City-owned properties. It will be forwarded to the Economic Development Committee.
- The Seat Pleasant CDC project on Addison road fell through.
- All grant reports are current.
- We are still awaiting award notice for FY32 CDBG application.
- Internal Audit – Lindsey & Associates is awaiting an opportunity to meet with the Finance Committee to review the company’s internal audit proposal.
- External Audit – Mr. Jim Lindsey has advised that on site performance and follow-up meetings regarding the City’s external audit have been completed. Lindsey & Associates will forward the final audit results and schedule a meeting with the City Council shortly.
- N&A worked closely with Code Enforcement to design and implement the new and highly successful compliance process to abate code issues.
- Ms. Sanders underwent CSAFE training to comply with grant requirements.
- New directional signs have been posted on Addison Road directing visitors to the Feggans Center.
- A trash contract with Bates Trucking is being finalized. The City currently has no service contract for trash and recycling.
- A recommendation to purchase 10 new vehicles for the police department (8 sedans and 2 SUV’s) has been packaged. The Public Safety Committee was unable to meet last week to review the proposal.
- Mr. Sussman is working on amendments to the City Code and O-07-04, Reserve Officer Program ordinance, so that the Police Department can implement the Reserve Officer Program. The projected date for the legislation is February 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Ms. Yates will be on Sick Leave Thursday, February 14<sup>th</sup> and Friday, February 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **City Council Committee Reports**

- 8a. The Economic Development, Housing and Planning Committee had submitted a written report.
- 8b. The Finance and Budget Committee had submitted a written report.
- 8d. The Human Services, Health and Education Committee had submitted a written report.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Black History Program**

Councilmember Higgs stated that the company will be charging the City \$250.00 and the City need to have a keyboard for the program by February 16, 2008.

**Seat Pleasant Day**

The item was postponed until next month.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor & Council meeting with Senator Exum & Delegates Howard & Vaughn, February 9, 2008 at 8:00am, 1821 Brightseat Rd, Landover, MD.

**ADJOURN**

It was motioned by Councilmember Morris and seconded by Councilmember Porter to adjourned the meeting. The motioned carried and the meeting was adjourned at 9:20p.m.

Submitted,



Dashaun Lanham  
Acting City Clerk